

REMARKS

Entry of this Amendment under 37 C.F.R. §1.116 is respectfully requested because it places this application into allowance. Alternately, entry is requested because it clarifies issues for appeal. Further, entry is requested because this Amendment responds to issues raised by the Examiner at page 3, lines 4-13 of the Office Action.

No new matter is believed to be added to the application by this Amendment.

Status of the Claims

Claims 1, 3, 5, 7 and 9-12 are pending in the application. The amendments to claim 1 find support in Table 1 at page 28 of the specification

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) Over Oka

Claims 1-12 remain rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Oka (U.S. Patent 5,292,132). Applicant traverses.

The Present Invention and Its Advantages

The invention pertains to a novel golf ball. An important aspect of the invention lies in that 60 to 100 rectangles having a 1.0 mm X 2.4 mm size can be formed in an area not lying in any of the dimples, and 20 to 50 of these configurations can be found in a region not proximate to the great circle zone.

The invention finds a typical embodied in instantly amended claim 1:

1. A golf ball having 360 or more dimples and only one great circle zone not intersecting with said dimples formed on a surface of said golf ball such that a surface area occupancy percentage of said dimples is 70% or more,

wherein rectangles each having a shorter side of 1.0mm and a longer side of 2.4mm and not containing any of said dimples are formed in a range of 60 to 100, and large flat portions with said rectangles overlapping each other in an area not more than a half of an entire area of each other and without said rectangles separating from each other are formed in a range of 20 to 50, said rectangles and large flat portions are formed in a region other than a region proximate to said great circle zone.

Distinctions of the Invention Over Oka

Oka pertains to a golf ball having dimples and lands, where the dimples are arranged so that less than 40 lands are provided which contain a rectangle having a short side greater than 0.4 mm and an area greater than 0.8 mm² and not including a part of the dimple or the whole thereof. See Abstract of Oka.

Oka fails to disclose or suggest the instantly claimed "rectangles each having a shorter side of 1.0mm and a longer side of 2.4mm and not containing any of said dimples are formed in a range of 60 to 100." See claim 1.

Distinctions of the invention over Oka were discussed in the Amendment filed October 3, 2003. In reply, at page 3 of the Office Action in his Response to Arguments, the Examiner discusses the Abstract of Oka, stating: "In the summary of the invention, it is noted that the number of lands may not exceed 40, in which 40 is included in the applicant's claimed range." Oka at column 1, line

55 has the phrase "does not exceed 40." However, Oka in the Abstract at column 1, line 47 and column 2, line 21 recites "less than 40 lands."

To better illustrate the fundamental differences between Oka and the invention, claim 1 has been instantly amended to recite "a range of 60 to 100." Oka now clearly fails to suggest the range of this embodiment of the invention set forth in claim 1.

As a result, Oka fails to suggest the present invention of claim 1 to one having ordinary skill in the art. A *prima facie* case of obviousness has thus not been made over Oka. Claims dependent upon claim 1 are patentable for at least the above reasons.

This rejection is accordingly overcome and withdrawal thereof is respectfully requested.

Information Disclosure Statement

Applicant thanks the Examiner for considering the Information Disclosure Statement filed November 8, 2002, and for making the updated initialed PTO-1449 form of record in the application in the Office Action mailed June 3, 2003.

The Drawings

The Examiner is respectfully requested to indicate whether the drawing figures are acceptable in the next official action.

Foreign Priority

The Examiner has acknowledged the claim of foreign priority, most recently in the Office Action mailed December 1, 2003.

Conclusion

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Robert E. Goozner, Ph.D. (Reg. No. 42,593) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.17 and 1.136(a), Applicant(s) respectfully petition(s) for a two (2) months extension of time for filing a reply in connection with the present application, and the required fee of \$420.00 is attached hereto.

Amendment dated May 3, 2004
Response to Final Office Action of December 1, 2003

Appl. No. 09/707,944
Group: 3711

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

By 

Joseph A. Kolasch, #22,463


JAK/REG:jls
2927-0117P

P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, VA 22040-0747
(703) 205-8000